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C O N F I D E N T I A L KATHMANDU 000860

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SA/INS
LONDON FOR POL - GURNEY

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [PGOV](#) [NP](#) [GON](#)

SUBJECT: NEPAL: GOVERNMENT HOLDS SECOND ROUND OF DIALOGUE
WITH MAOIST INSURGENTS

REF: KATHMANDU 0837

Classified By: DCM ROBERT K. BOGGS. REASON: 1.5 (B,D).

¶1. (U) On May 9 Government of Nepal (GON) negotiators held a second round of talks with Maoist insurgents at a hotel in Kathmandu (located less than one km from the Embassy). The talks concluded more quickly than the first round, held April 27, ending after only two and a half hours. As of 4:00 P.M. local time May 9, neither the GON nor the Maoists had announced to the press the results of this latest round. No date for a subsequent round of talks has yet been announced.

¶2. (C) Police sources said that this latest round produced three significant agreements. First, the GON reportedly agreed that soldiers from the Royal Nepal Army (RNA) would patrol no farther than five km outside their barracks. Second, the GON committed to releasing three Maoist Central Committee Member detainees, and to providing information on the whereabouts of another 320 Maoist detainees. Third, both sides agreed to the establishment of a 13-member committee to monitor compliance with the ceasefire code of conduct.

¶3. (C) A partial list of the members of the monitoring committee provided by police sources includes six names of individuals (four of them openly sympathetic to the Maoists), with the remaining seven unnamed members designated by membership in other organizations (i.e., a member of the National Human Rights Commission; a member of the Bar Association; a member of the National Women's Commission; a member of the journalists association; a member of the National Chamber of Commerce). Another member, Hem Bahadur Singh, is a former Inspector General of Police.

¶4. (C) Comment: At first glance, the GON appears to have ceded more territory in this latest round than they have gained. Allowing the RNA to patrol at all--even if limited to a 5-km radius around their barracks--represents at best a minor concession for the Maoists, who had been demanding that the troops be confined to barracks. The GON had indicated earlier its willingness to release the last few members of the Central Committee still detained. Its decision to do so now, after the conclusion of the second round of talks is likely intended as a show of good faith. It is too early to tell if the final composition of the monitoring team will be more politically balanced than it appears at present; much depends on the affiliations of the remaining seven individuals to be identified. It is difficult to determine, based on these preliminary reports, the extent of GON concessions. If our sources' descriptions are accurate, it seems likely that the GON commitments are intended as confidence-building measures to maintain momentum--and thus popular support--for dialogue.

MALINOWSKI